



MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
10 -16 GRENADA WAY  
KINGSTON 5, JAMAICA.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)

### 1. What is Zika Fever?

This is a mosquito-borne viral illness caused by the Zika virus (ZIKV).

### 2. How is ZIKV spread?

In Jamaica, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the only mosquito that can spread this disease. If the mosquito bites someone who is infected with ZIKV, the mosquito becomes a carrier of the virus and infects any one it bites.

This mosquito which is commonly found in Jamaica also transmits the dengue and chikungunya viruses. There are other types of *Aedes* mosquitoes which can spread these viruses, but they are not found in Jamaica.

### 3. What are the habits of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito?

- The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito bites at any time during the day or night. It is found in and around homes, schools, workplaces, and other places where people gather.
- One infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is able to infect several persons.
- The mosquito breeds in any container where water is allowed to settle. The most common breeding sites are drums, tyres, flower pots and containers in and around homes, schools, workplaces and communities.
- The *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes produce on average 100 to 200 eggs per batch. Laid eggs can survive for very long periods in a dry state, often for more than a year.

- The life span of the adult mosquito is two (2) weeks to a month.

#### **4. What are the symptoms of Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

The most common symptoms of Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection) are:

- mild to severe fever
- rash (which may itch)
- redness of eyes
- joint pains
- headache
- myalgia (muscle pain)
- oedema ( swelling) in lower limbs
- weakness

Persons may also experience:

- vomiting
- diarrhoea
- loss of appetite
- abdominal pain

Birth defects have been seen in some newborns whose mothers had Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection) in pregnancy. There are neurological (brain and nerve related) and autoimmune complications that have been noted as well.

#### **5. How soon after being bitten by the infected mosquito will I experience symptoms?**

Symptoms are usually experienced three (3) to twelve (12) days after being bitten by the infected mosquito. This is called the Incubation Period. Symptoms will usually last for two (2) to seven (7) days and are self-limiting.

#### **6. Who is at risk for more severe symptoms?**

- Infants
- The elderly
- Pregnant women
- Persons with underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, heart diseases, hypertension and Sickle Cell Disease.

**7. Have there been any deaths associated with Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

Yes.

**8. What is the treatment for Zila Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

There is no specific medication for the treatment of Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection). Medication can be taken to reduce the fever, pain and other symptoms. However, only Paracetamol (Acetaminophen) should be used for pain and fever. DO NOT TAKE pain killers such as aspirin, ibuprofen and other anti-inflammatory drugs e.g. diclofenac. Check with your Doctor or Pharmacist to be sure!

**Persons who think they have Zika Fever (Zika Virus infection) should:**

- Take Paracetamol (Acetaminophen) for fever and pain
- Report to their Doctor or nearest Health Centre, if symptoms persist or become severe
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Avoid mosquito bites

**9. What can be done to reduce the risk of getting Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection). The best prevention is to:

*A.* Reduce or eliminate mosquito breeding sites as follows:

- Check premises weekly for water-filled containers.
- Throw away or recycle water containers that are not needed.
- Containers such as drums should be fully and tightly covered, turned over or placed under a roof that does not allow them to fill with water.
- Clean and scrub flower vases and pet's water containers weekly and dump the water from overflow saucers under potted plants and flower pots.
- Clear roof gutters and eaves to prevent water from settling.
- Fill tree holes and other cavities in plants with soil or sand.
- Repair leaking pipes and outside faucets

B. Protect yourself from mosquito bites by:

- Using a mosquito repellent that contains DEET, IR3535 or Icaridin
- Sleeping under a mosquito net
- Wearing light coloured clothing and cover body as much as possible

**10. Since there is no vaccine against ZIKV, what should I do if I travel to a country where there is an outbreak of Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

- You should take the necessary measures to protect yourself from mosquito bites through the use of repellents or the use of appropriate clothes that minimize skin exposure.
- Avoid mosquito-infested areas.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms of dengue, chikungunya, and Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection) occur.

**11. What actions are being taken by the Ministry of Health to address Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection)?**

The Ministry has heightened its preparedness and response in the following areas:

- Surveillance
- Public Education
- Clinical Management
- Vector Control
- Laboratory Strengthening
- Training
- Social Mobilization
- Intersectoral Collaboration
- International Corporation
- Resource Mobilization

**12. How can individuals/communities help prevent mosquito breeding?**

Mosquito breeding prevention is everybody's business. You can do your part to prevent mosquito breeding by:

- organizing clean-up activities in your communities
- identifying, preventing or eliminating mosquito breeding sites
- reporting mosquito breeding sites that will require assistance from relevant authorities

### **13. Where can I get more information on Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection) ?**

You can get more information by calling:

- The Toll Free Line, 1-888- ONE LOVE (1-888-663-5683) or 633-7914
- Your Parish Health Department

You can also visit the Ministry of Health's website at: [www.moh.gov.jm](http://www.moh.gov.jm)

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# MOSQUITOES CAN SPREAD DISEASES



## MOSQUITO PREVENTION CHECKLIST

- Keep house plants in damp soil instead of water
- Keep flower pot saucers dry and avoid over-watering potted plants
- Empty and scrub flower vases twice weekly
- Empty and wash pet's water container twice per week
- Keep refrigerator troughs dry
- Punch holes in bottom of tins before placing them in the garbage
- Get rid of all old tyres, tins, bottles, plastic containers, coconut shells and anything in which rain water can settle
- Cover trash containers to keep out rain water
- Cover all drums, barrels, tanks, buckets and any other container that is used to store water
- Repair leaky pipes and outdoor taps
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well trimmed so adult mosquitoes will not hide there
- Keep drains and ditches clear of weeds and trash so water will drain properly
- Fill in or drain any low places (puddles, ruts) in yard
- Clear roof gutters and eaves often to prevent water from settling
- Use commercially available insecticide
- Protect yourself from mosquito bites by:
  - Using a mosquito repellent that contains DEET
  - Sleeping under a mosquito net
  - Closing windows before dark
  - Opening windows and doors during fogging
  - Wearing light coloured clothing and covering your body as much as possible.

**REMEMBER**  
**Mosquitoes can spread diseases.**  
**Get rid of them.**

For further information call toll-free 1-888-663-5683.

A Message from the **Ministry of Health**

(Revised 2010)



Ministry of Health

# ZIKA Alert!!!

## Be Aware

The Zika Virus (ZIKV) is spread by the bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.



### Symptoms identified with Zika Fever (Zika Virus Infection) are:

- ✓ mild to severe fever
- ✓ rash which may itch
- ✓ redness of eyes
- ✓ joint pains
- ✓ headache
- ✓ muscle pain
- ✓ swelling in lower limb
- ✓ weakness

### Treatment

No specific treatment. Medication can be taken to reduce fever, pain and other symptoms. However, only *Paracetamol (Acetaminophen)* should be used for pain and fever. **DO NOT TAKE** pain killers such as aspirin, ibuprofen and other anti-inflammatory drugs.

### Persons at risk for severe symptoms

- Pregnant women • Infants • Elderly
- Persons with underlying medical conditions such as: Diabetes, Heart Disease, Hypertension and Sickle Cell Disease.

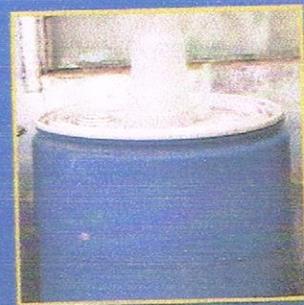
# ZIKA Alert!!!

## Be Prepared.

**DO YOUR PART BY  
PREVENTING MOSQUITO  
BREEDING.**



- ✓ Check inside and outside your home weekly to identify and destroy breeding sites.
- ✓ Cover drums tightly.
- ✓ Organize clean up campaigns in your home, school and workplace.



## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOSQUITO BITES.

- ✓ Use mosquito repellent with Deet.
- ✓ Sleep under a mosquito net.
- ✓ Cover body as much as possible.
- ✓ Wear light coloured clothing.

## ACT NOW!!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

• 1-888- ONE LOVE (1-888-663-5683)  
or 633-7914

• Your Parish Health Department

You can also visit the Ministry of Health's website  
at: [www.moh.gov.jm](http://www.moh.gov.jm)

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